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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5789
INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 8298
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 2967
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 9246
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE 5061
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR 3764
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
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SUBJECT: FATA IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE FOR 03/07/08

REF: ISLAMABAD 932

Classified By: Ambassador Anne Patterson, reason 1.4 (b), (d)

11. (U) Summary: Following below is a summary of US Mission Islamabad's activities in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) along its northwest border with Afghanistan during the week ending March 7, 2008.

ODRP FATA Programs

12. (C) Senior ODRP officers met with Major General Pasha, Pakistan's Director General of Military Operations on March 7 regarding ODRP's ongoing planning for training for the Frontier Corps later this year. MG Pasha stressed the Pakistan government's very strong wish that any public discussion, and in particular any release to the media, of US training for the Frontier Corps be first coordinated with the Pakistani military.

USAID FATA Programs

13. (U) USAID reports the government-sponsored Cricket tournament which it helped sponsor in Khyber Agency drew crowds of up to 500 daily and has been on Radio Khyber and in the local press. USAID's local staff report the tournament is fostering a positive sense of a return to normalcy in an area where civil strife has been endemic.

14. (U) USAID is supporting the establishment of a radio station in Swat and conflict mitigation programs for FATA radio stations through a six-week training program of 50 media professionals. The first week of training was for presenters on how to conduct conflict mitigation using moderate interpretations of Islam.

15. (SBU) The USAID deputy director spent the past week in Peshawar and FATA Agencies visiting relevant USAID projects. He noted at all of the 36 schools we have built in the FATA enrollment is up significantly, at some up to 75%. He stressed that of the 36 schools we have built in FATA only one--one--has been destroyed by the Taliban, despite apparent rumors of many more being torched. USAID, through its implementing partners, will be building another 24 schools in the FATA Agencies.

Security in FATA

¶6. (SBU) Despite the success of USAID's other FATA programs which we mention in our weekly updates, security in the region remains a central impediment to getting the job done. USAID's latest weekly update provides a vivid example. The tragic attack on a multi-tribal "jirga", or council, in Darra Adam Khel a week ago significantly tightened security on roads in the region. This was compounded by an incident in Mohmand on March 3, when Frontier Corps forces fired a rocket launcher at a car filled with six Taliban at a check post in Nawagai after the Taliban refused to let the car be searched. The subsequent explosion was so loud, the general view was the vehicle was filled with explosives.

PATTERSON